

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

SAM-01 /059 W

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R 061010Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3533

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 2291

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, TC

SUBJ: SHAIKH OF SHARJAH ANNOUNCES UNITY MOVES

1. TAKING MANY BY SURPRISE HERE, SHAIKH SULTAN OF SHARJAH GAVE SPEECH NOV 4 STATING THAT HE WAS PREPARED TO "AMALGAMATE" HIS EMIRATE'S AUTHORITY IN FIELDS OF MILITARY AFFAIRS, SECURITY, TELECOMMUNICATIONS, BROADCASTING, AND JUDICIARY WITH FEDERAL MINISTRIES. IN HIS STATEMENT SHAIKH SULTAN WENT ON TO SAY THAT THESE MOVES WERE IN ACCORDANCE WITH DEEP DESIRE OF PEOPLE IN EMIRATES FOR GROWING UNIFICATION BETWEEN THE SHAIKHDOMS.

2. COMMENT: WHAT PRECISELY LIES BEHIND THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IN TERMS OF POLITICAL REALITY AS OPPOSED TO PUBLIC RELATIONS IS NOT CLEAR FROM SHAIKH SULTAN'S STATEMENT, AND WE WILL PROBABLY NOT KNOW UNTIL WE HAVE A CHANCE TO SPEAK TO SULTAN HIMSELF. OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, STATEMENT REFLECTS DEAL WORKED OUT BETWEEN SHAIKHS ZAYID AND SULTAN WHICH REPRESENTS SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL VICTORY FOR SHAIKH ZAYID AND HIS FOREIGN MINISTER WHO HAVE BEEN PUSHING HARD FOR STRONGER FEDERAL AUTHORITY. ONE USUALLY WELL-INFORMED DIPLOMATIC SOURCE HERE CLAIMS THAT SHAIKH SULTAN IS RUNNING OUT OF MONEY AS RESULT OF AMBITIOUS
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DEVELOPMENT SPENDING IN HIS EMIRATE, AND THAT SHAIKH ZAYID

FOR ONCE DEMANDED POLITICAL PRICE IN FORM OF THESE CONCESSIONS
IN RETURN FOR BAILING HIM OUT. FIGURE MENTIONED BY THIS SOURCE
(ABOUT \$10 MILLION) DOES NOT, HOWEVER, SEEM LARGE ENOUGH
FOR SHAIKH SULTAN TO HAVE SOLD OUT HIS EMIRATE TO THE FEDERATION.
\$10 MILLION FIGURE MIGHT BE MORE REASONABLE IF SHAIKH SULTAN'S
CONCESSION CONSISTS MAINLY, AS IS QUITE POSSIBLE, OF PUBLIC RELATIONS
GESTURE WITH LITTLE REAL INTENTION TO PUT "AMALGAMATION" INTO EFFECT
IN NEAR FUTURE. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY, PLAUSIBLE FROM THE HEAVY
CRITICISM OF FEDERAL LAWS WHICH WE RECEIVED FROM SULTAN HIMSELF
RECENTLY, IS THAT SULTAN HAS OBTAINED IN RETURN FOR THIS PUBLIC
SUPPORT FOR FEDERATION ASSURANCES THAT HIS VIEWS, AND PERHAPS THOSE
OF SHAIKH SAQR AND RASHID AS WELL, WILL BE TAKEN HEAVILY INTO
ACCOUNT IN PREPARATION OF FEDERAL LAWS AND DRAFTING OF NEW
CONSTITUTION WHICH IS UNDERWAY AT PRESENT. EVEN SO, SULTAN'S
PUBLIC STATEMENT, COMING JUST AT MOMENT WHEN RULERS ARE PONDERING
REPORTS OF MILITARY COMMITTEES, AND TEN DAYS BEFORE SCHEDULED
MEETING OF SUPREME COUNCIL TO CONSIDER THESE RECOMMENDATIONS, WILL
PUT SOME ADDITIONAL PRESSURE ON SHAIKHS RASHID AND SAQR. SHAIKH ZAYID
HAS SCORED A DEFINITE PSYCHOLOGICAL GAIN.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, SPEECHES, POLITICAL LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 NOV 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ABUDH02291
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750385-1192
From: ABU DHABI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751170/aaaacked.tel
Line Count: 81
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <24 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SHAIKH OF SHARJAH ANNOUNCES UNITY MOVES
TAGS: PINT, TC, (SULTAN, SHAIKH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006